

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS, PINT, SF
SUBJ: FACTIONAL CLASHES IN PENINSULA TOWNSHIPS LEAVES 24 DEAD,
106 WOUNDED

REF: CAPE TOWN 1273

SUMMARY: REVIVAL OF EARLIER FACTIONAL HOSTILITIES IN PENINSULA
TOWNSHIPS BETWEEN MIGRANT WORKERS FROM TRANSKEI AND TOWNSHIP
RESIDENTS ON SUNDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 26 CONTINUING THROUGH
THE FOLLOWING DAY AND NIGHT RESULTED IN THE WHOLE/PARTIAL DESTRUC-
TION OF 186 HOUSES, AND FIGHTING RESULTING IN 24 DEAD AND 106
SERIOUSLY WOUNDED. UNEASY QUIET PERSISTS IN THREE TOWNSHIPS
AFTER NIGHT-LONG VIGIL. END SUMMARY.

1. THE SIMMERING RESENTMENT AND HOSTILITY OF AMABHACA MIGRANT
WORKERS (TRIBESMEN) FROM TRANSKEI TOWARD MILITANT BLACK YOUTHS
FROM THE LOCAL TOWNSHIPS BURST INTO FLAME SUNDAY EVENING WHEN
GROUPS OF THE FORMER BEGAN MOVING AGAINST LOCAL RESIDENTS.
ARMED WITH FIGHTING STICKES, AND IN SOME CASES PANGAS, AND WEARING
THEIR TRADITIONAL "WHITE CAPS," THE WORKERS ATTACKED LOCAL
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RESIDENTS, MOST OF WHOM FLED FROM THE ASSAULTS, ONLY TO SEE
THEIR HOMES SET ALIGHT BY THE ATTACKERS. FIVE THOUSAND
FLED TO SAFETY IN THE ADJOINING TOWNSHIP OF GUGULETU.

2. THE CONFRONTATION OF TWO WEEKS AGO (SEE REFTTEL) BETWEEN STUDENTS
AND WORKERS, MANY OF WHOM ARE NOW ON CHRISTMAS LEAVE, FROM

THE CONSTRUCTION

INDUSTRY, LEFT SOME HARD FEELINGS AMONG THE LATTER, PARTICULARLY AFTER RECEIVING NEW DEMANDS FROM THE YOUTHS TO FOREGO ANY CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES AND VISIT INSTEAD LOCAL BLACK CEMENTERIES IN REMEMBRANCE OF SOWETO, UNDER THREAT OF HAVING THEIR HOSTALS BURNED.

3. MOST OF THE ACTION TOOK PLACE IN NYANGA TOWNSHIP WHERE THE HOSTELS OF THE MIGRANT WORKERS ARE LOCATED. ATTACKS ON SHEBEENS (LOCAL LIQUOR OUTLETS) AND OTHER FORMS OF INTIMIDATION SUCH AS YOUTHS CONFISCATION OR DESTROYING AT THE TOWNSHIP BORDERS ANY PARCELS WHICH THEY DEEMED REFLECTED THE SEASON AND WAS CONSIDERED IN EXCESS OF THE BEARER'S BASIC NEEDS.

4. PARENTS IN THE TOWNSHIPS WHO SYMPATHIZED WITH YOUTHS' AIMS BUT OBJECT TO THEIR METHODS ARE CONFUSED BY FACT THAT LOCAL BLACK CLERGYMEN ARE PROVIDING MUCH OF THE INSPIRATION AND GUIDANCE FOR THE UNHAPPY YOUTH WHICH HAS RESULTED IN ACTS OF VIOLENCE AND THE RETALIATORY ACTIONS FROM THOSE WHO DO NOT IDENTIFY THEIR INTERESTS WITH THOSE IN THE TOWNSHIPS.

5. THE MIGRANT WORKERS ARE ON TWELVE/EIGHTEEN-MONTH CONTRACTS AND ARE ENDEAVORING TO SEND MONEY TO FAMILIES IN TRANSKEI AND TO SAVE SOMETHING FOR THE FUTURE. MANY LOST WHAT LITTLE THEY HAD TWO WEEKS AGO WHEN THEIR HOSTELS WERE BURNED BY YOUTHS. (THE TERM 'STUDENTS' CANNOT BE USED BECAUSE MANY OF THE TROUBLE-MAKERS ARE SCHOOL DROPOUTS WHO TERRORIZE EVEN THEIR OWN NEIGHBORS AND OTHERS WHO HAVE ALREADY ACQUIESED TO 'STUDENT' DEMANDS.)

6. EDITORIAL COMMENT IN THE CAPE TIMES (LIBERAL) SUMS UP THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VIEWS OF MANY IN THE AREA. "ANY ATTEMPT, BY ANY GROUP TO TAKE THE LAW INTO ITS OWN HANDS MUST BE CONDEMNED. BUT THERE SHOULD ALSO BE A LESSON IN THE EVENTS OF THE WEEKEND FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO IMPOSE THEIR OWN COURSE OF ACTION ON OTHERS. MATTERS OF PRINCIPLE AND CONSCIENCE SHOULD BE LEFT TO THE INDIVIDUAL. VIOLENT ENFORCEMENT, WHETHER TO MOURN, OR STRIKE -- OR GO TO WORK -- MUST INEVITABLY BEGET VIOLENCE."

7. WORD RECENTLY CIRCULATED THAT THE YOUTH ARE AWAITING THE RETURN TO WORK OF THE MIGRANT WORKERS TO REPAY BURNING FOR BURNING BODES ILL FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE OF THE PENINSULA TOWNSHPS UNLESS REASON AGAIN PREVAILS ON BOTH SIDES AGAINST THISCOURSE OF SELF-DESTRUCTION.
WHITE

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